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PROGRAM The Today Show

STATION WRC TV  
NBC Network

DATE July 28, 1980 7:00 AM CITY Washington, D. C.

SUBJECT An Interview with Ambassador Richard Helms

JANE PAULEY: Well the question now that the Shah of Iran is dead is will his death do anything to hasten the release of the 52 Americans who are still being held hostage in Iran.

The former American Ambassador in Tehran, Richard Helms, is in our Washington studio now with Richard Valeriani.

Good morning, gentlemen.

RICHARD VALERIANI: Good morning, Jane.

Mr. Ambassador, you've heard the question. What is the answer?

AMBASSADOR RICHARD HELMS: I think it's extraordinarily difficult to predict what effect the Shah's death is going to have on the hostages. When one recognizes that the Iranian government believes that they have a legitimate reason for holding those hostages, and we on our side regard it as a reprehensible and totally illegitimate act, it shows how far apart the thinking between the two countries is and the two societies is.

Therefore, the death of the Shah eliminates one of their demands. They wanted him back. But they also wanted his money. They wanted us to apologize for our treatment of their country over the past many years, etcetera. So I think it's going to take some time before we see whether this has any effect or not.

VALERIANI: How do you see this problem eventually being resolved then?

AMBASSADOR HELMS:

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